

217

Top Secret

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Friday April 15, 1977

CG NIDC 77-87C

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Friday, April 15, 1977.

The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

CONTENTS

PAKISTAN: Situation Report

Page 1

IRAN: Human Rights Issue

Page 5

25X1

Approved For Release 2005/06/09 : CIA-RDP79T00975A030000010026-9

PAKISTAN: Situation Report

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[redacted] Negotiations aimed at making a transfer of power in Pakistan constitutional and peaceful may have gained Prime Minister Bhutto some time, but many in Pakistan believe that his position is hopeless.

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[redacted] Demonstrations against Bhutto continue, and labor and students--two important groups that did not participate in the early stages of the opposition's campaign--are now taking the lead in some places. Major demonstrations, perhaps the largest yet, are planned for today.

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[redacted] Symbolic of Bhutto's eroding position were the resignations of two ambassadors who, as military officers, played a key role in his coming to power in 1971. [redacted]

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[redacted] as many as 40 members of the national and provincial assemblies have resigned from Bhutto's party.

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[redacted] An interview by Bhutto with the British Broadcasting Company--which probably has more listeners in Pakistan than the government-controlled radio--also reflected the Prime Minister's weakness. He again called for negotiations with the opposition, but apparently he is willing to agree to almost any preconditions. In the interview he changed his usual implied threat to use force to stay in power, saying instead that without a negotiated solution extremists might take over or there might be a prolonged period of military rule.

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[redacted] Yesterday, in a speech to party members, Bhutto urged them to exercise restraint for a few more days, possibly an indication that Bhutto expects the confrontation to be resolved soon.

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Next 2 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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IRAN: Human Rights Issue

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[REDACTED] //The Iranian government's judgment that it must do more to improve its poor international image on the human rights issue led it to change its previous practice and try 11 terrorists in public last weekend. Iran is unlikely to apply the new procedure to all terrorists.//

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[REDACTED] //In Iran, crimes against the state--such as terrorism--are usually tried before a military tribunal in closed session. The state internal security organization, SAVAK, is the sole investigator; it orders the arrests and assembles the evidence. The accused has had no right to demand that witnesses against him be cross-examined. He has no access to counsel, which is chosen from a court-supplied list, until 10 days before the trial.//

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[REDACTED] //Iran has always dismissed international criticism of these procedures as interference in its internal affairs. Although it still holds this opinion, it has recently seemed willing to alter procedures in the hope of dampening criticism.//

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[REDACTED] We doubt that the government will apply the new trial practices to all terrorists or will relax its counterterrorist effort. Those charged with particularly violent acts will probably continue to receive special handling.

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[REDACTED] //Terrorism will remain a major problem for the Iranian government. The capability and organization of the two main dissident groups remain essentially unimpaired. The groups evidently are well armed and well staffed.

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[REDACTED] //Assassination of government officials remains the principal danger. One dissident group, the People's Strugglers, continues to regard the assassination of US citizens in Iran as a way to achieve its goals. Five Americans have been killed by terrorists since May 1975, and further attacks are likely.// [REDACTED]

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